

Message Text

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17-12

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SY-05 OPR-02 A-01 SAM-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2959

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0974

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SY

SUBJ: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON DEPUTY PRIMMIN FOR ECONOMIC
AFFAIRS MUHAMMAD HAYDAR FOR SECRETARY'S VISIT

1. SARG PROTOCOL OFFICE REPORTS THAT FONMIN KHADDAM WILL BE ABSENT DURING SECRETARY'S MARCH 15 VISIT, SINCE HE DEPARTING DAMASCUSEARLY MORNING MARCH 15 TO ATTEND FOREIGN MINISTERS COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF NON-ALIGNED NATIONS CONFERENCE IN HAVANA. THE ACTING FONMIN WILL BE DEPUTY PRIMIN FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS MUHAMMAD HAYDAR. HE WILL MEET SECRETARY AT AIRPORT AND BE HIS OFFICIAL ESCORT. SECRETARY WILL RECALL HAYDAR ATTENDED HIS MARCH 9 MEETING WITH ASAD. FOLLOWING IS RELEVANT BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON HAYDAR.

2. HAYDAR IS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF PRESIDENT ASAD. FOLLOWING ASAD'S 1970, HAYDAR SERVED ON THREE-MAN COMMITTEE WHICH ADVISED ASAD ON CHOICE OF BAATH REGIONAL COMMAND AND SARG CABINET. IN APRIL 1971 BECAME MIN OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRARIAN REFORM AND ASSUMED PRESENT POSITION SEPTEMBER 1973. HAYDAR HAS FOLLOWED FLECIBLE RATHER THAN HARD LINE BAATHI ECONOMIC POLICY WHICH EMPHASIZES STATE CONTROL, STATING THAT SYRIA WELCOMES PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND PRESIDEING OVER CURRENCY REFORMS

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DESIGNED TO ATTRACT DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL. HE IS A DECISIVE

ADMINISTRATOR AND A "CLEAN DESK MAN",
WHO HAS PROVEN HELPFUL TO U.S. IN CONTEXT OF DEVELOPING
BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS.

3. HAYDAR IS AROUND 44, AND ALAWITE, AND A MEMBER OF
THE BAATH REGIONAL COMMAND. HE SPEAKS NO ENGLISH.

4. IF OCCASION ARISES SECRETARY MAY WISH EXPRESS TO
HAYDAR HIS PLEASURE THAT AID AGREEMENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN
SIGNED FOR \$25 MILLION IN FY 75 AND HIS HOPES THAT SARG WILL
TAKE EARLY DECISIONS ON HOW TO COMMIT THAT MONEY AS
WELL AS BALANCE OF THE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FUNDS
AVAILABLE FOR SYRIA THIS YEAR.
MURPHY

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NNN

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